

**MINUTES**  
**Utah Commission on Aging**  
**February 6, 2008**  
**1:00 – 3:00 pm**

**Commission Member Attendees:**

Maureen Henry  
Cherie Brunker  
Gary Kelso for Sara Sinclair  
Representative Steven Mascaro  
Rob Ence  
Mark Supiano  
Susan Speer for Diana Kirk  
Helen Thatcher for Kristin Cox  
Michael Deily for David Sundwall  
Councilwoman Suzanne Allen  
Kent Alderman

**Representing:**

Executive Director  
Health Care  
Long Term Care  
Utah House of Representatives  
Advocacy Organizations  
Higher Education  
Financial Institutions  
Workforce Services  
Utah Department of Health  
Public Transportation  
Legal Profession

**Other Attendees:**

Fran Wilby  
Tyler Ross  
Laura Polachek

College of Social Work  
Intern for Representative Mascaro  
AARP

The meeting was called to order by Rob Ence, who was asked to chair the meeting.

- 1. Welcome and Introductions.**
- 2. Consideration of Proposed Strategic Plan.**

**Objectives for 2008:**

- Reconvene Financial Security committee to undertake assessment and distribution of Financial Guide: Rob explained that the outreach has started; the next step will be to have a joint project with a United Way and USU Extension focus group going into Utah Saves Saver Sites to do a pre-survey with a 30-60 day follow-up with groups of employees to determine if behaviors have changed, whether the workbook was useful, and if modifications need to be made to make the booklet more consumer friendly.

Rob will work with a committee to come up with assessment forms, as well as a proposal for the Commission by the next meeting. The Governor has expressed his support for this project.

Maureen indicated that the Commission needs an evaluation component to everything it does so that activities can serve as the basis for policy recommendations.

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Rob mentioned that there are other states that have created a state “401K” program where individual businesses or proprietors can participate in a state retirement pool. He suggested that the Commission evaluate what other states have done in this area.

- Maintaining legislative presence:
  - Advance Directive Clean-up Bill, SB 161 ('08 session) – sponsored by Rep. Mascaro in the House and Sen. Christensen in the Senate
  - Surrogate Decision Making Committee Bill/Request for Task Force ('08 session)
  - Tuition Reimbursement Bill ('09 session) – conversations with Sen. Davis & Pres. Valentine for loan forgiveness for Medicine and Nursing students who specialize in geriatrics
  
- Release of Utah 2030 Report and Aging in Utah PR Tour: The report will be sent to the departments for a final read-through; it will be released in March.
  
- Long Term Care Planning:
  - Continue Long-Term (20+ years out) Long-Term Care Committee’s work
  - Collaborating with committee/Legislative Research and General Counsel/Legislative Fiscal Analyst to consider how to right-size the nursing facility industry – there is a committee that has come out of the Medicaid Interim Committee that is looking at right-sizing the nursing facility industry that the Utah Health Care Association has convened - Rep. Newbold and Sen. Christensen are sitting on this committee; the committee is trying to come up with concrete recommendations that the state can take and turn into policy recommendations to address the current issue; that is, Utah has a lot more beds than patients in nursing home facilities.
  
- Workforce: Reconvene HR Directors: The state needs to consider how to keep people in the workforce longer. This issue was raised by the analysis of the Utah 2030 report. Utah’s economic success has its downside in that many state agencies may face shortages of professional workers, which potentially become a problem affecting economic growth, as shortages are already starting to appear. State government competes for skilled workers, and will have an increasingly difficult time filling the needs of the state government workforce because the economy is so strong. If people stay in the workforce longer, perhaps these challenges can be overcome. The Commission may have a legislative presence on this matter in '09.
  
- Economic Development: One issue that arose from the 2030 Report is promoting Utah as a senior-friendly tourist destination. Increases in senior tourists promotes an increase in destination retirement, which may bring positive benefits to Utah. The Commission will continue discussions with the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and the Utah Tourist Office to promote the message. Rep. Mascaro is promoting HB 158, a tax credit of up to \$500.00 for retired military personnel on the

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first \$10,000 of their military pay. There are approximately 12,000 military personnel who would benefit from this bill.

- Advance Directives: Work is taking place on a clean-up bill; in addition, there are plans for collaboration with other organizations to take on some of the work needed to implement the law. The Commission applied for a grant to be able to get the bill translated into other languages.
- Higher Education Advisory Group: This group will take the place of the Education group. Invitations have been sent to all the presidents of the HE institutions, asking them to appoint a representative. The first meeting will take place in March. We will be looking at the role of higher education and how to better serve the senior population. Louise will send the letter that was sent out to Councilwoman Allen and Rob Ence for further circulation.
- Other Active Committees:
  - Public Safety: The Committee is assessing how we can more effectively get law enforcement and prosecutors to pay more attention to financial exploitation and physical abuse in the elderly. The Committee has been working with Sheriff Winder on a survey for law enforcement officers that will be distributed shortly.
  - Community-Based Care: The Committee is monitoring the Long-Term Long-Term Care Committee. The Committee continues to emphasize the need for a quality statewide Information and Referral system for the aging population (211), and will convene a meeting with Lorna Koci regarding the 211 System.
  - Health Care: This Committee is discussing issues of physician supply and plans to have an event to bring together geriatricians throughout the state.
  - Mental Health: This Committee is focusing on the surrogate decision-making for individuals who lack capacity and also lack a surrogate.
- Long Term Strategy:
  - Outline and stick to a strategic growth plan
  - Seek grant funding – have applied for three small grants this month.
  - Consider opportunities to serve as contractor to state on aging issues
  - Continue discussions about future structure

**General Strategy:**

- Continue to do broad scope and long-term plans, as well as short-term projects
- Continue to look for opportunities to coordinate across silos, both within state government and the private sector, and also look for opportunities on our statutory obligation to look at how services can best be coordinated in the long term
- Consider the issues that were brought to light by Utah 2030
- Produce good outcomes and quality work

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- Function as a strong leader that has ties to both the community and the state
- Consider structures within the University that might parallel the Matheson Center for Health Care Studies

**Action Item:** The motion was made and seconded to approve the 2008 Strategic Plan. The members present voted to approve the plan. An e-mail will be circulated requesting members who were not present to vote on the plan.

**3. Discussion of Pending Legislation.**

Laura Polachek from AARP facilitated the discussion with Maureen regarding pending 2008 legislation affecting seniors. Maureen asked what the Commission's role should be in regard to providing testimony during the current legislative session. Maureen was asked to testify regarding the probate code, which she did under the auspices of her role as a former elder attorney.

The motion was made and seconded to authorize Maureen Henry to speak to the Legislature on behalf of the Commission in an education role regarding proposed legislation. The members present voted to approve this authorization. An e-mail will be circulated requesting members who were not present to vote on this authorization.

Two issues that arose are: 1) Make sure that Commission is in agreement on stance before providing testimony or education on bill, and 2) Watch the amendments to make sure the bill has not changed from its original purpose.

Laura mentioned that health care reform and property tax are issues that will directly affect seniors. Representative Mascaro stated that seniors will be affected if property tax losses are replaced by an increase in sales tax.

The next meeting will be held April 1, 2008, from 12:00 p.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2007, Commission Meeting. The members present voted to approve the minutes. An e-mail will be circulated requesting members who were not present to vote on the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.